

How to obtain advice

A nurse from ambulatory care will be available for advice on 0121 371 3120 Monday to Saturday 07:30 to 20:00 or call 07721 882 838 Sundays 10:00 to 16:00.

Also during weekdays (09:00 to 16:00) your consultant's secretary (if you know who that is) will be able to help you or direct you to someone who can.

If you have had hand therapy, you may also gain assistance from the department on 0121 371 3488.

Alternatively, the Hand Co-ordinator may be able to help you Monday to Friday 10:00 to 18:00. Please ring 0121 371 6169.

Outside these hours please telephone the main hospital switchboard (0121 627 2000) and ask for the nurses' desk in the Emergency Department.

Please feel free to ask anything, no matter how silly you may think the question, we are all here to help you.

Birmingham Hand Centre Contacts

Should you wish to contact your surgeon's secretary, please ring the appropriate telephone number below:

Mr M Brewster	0121 371 4969
Mr T Chaudhry	0121 371 4890
Mr D Chester	0121 371 4897
Mr MAC Craigen	0121 371 4969
Lt Col M Foster	0121 371 4897
Mr M Gupta	0121 371 4966
Mr R Jose	0121 371 4896
Mr T Madura	0121 371 4890
Mr D Power	0121 371 4992
Mr S Tan	0121 371 4992
Mr OG Titley	0121 371 4899
Mr MA Waldram	0121 371 4966
Mrs JB Webb	0121 371 4896

The Birmingham Hand Centre
Tel: 0121 627 2000



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust

The graphic is a dark blue rectangle with rounded corners. At the top left is a white circular logo consisting of two overlapping rings. To the right of the logo, the text 'Information for patients following hand surgery' is written in white. Below this, a white rounded rectangle contains the text 'The Birmingham Hand Centre' in bold. Underneath are two lines of text: 'Date of surgery' and 'Procedure', each followed by a dotted line. At the bottom of the white box are two more dotted lines.

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Welcome to Birmingham Hand Centre at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham

When you get home

On discharge from the hospital, you will be given a letter for your family doctor (GP) to explain to them what you have had done. Please arrange for this to be given in at the surgery. You do not need to make an appointment with your GP or nurse.

You should take pain-killing medicine regularly for at least the next two days. If you have none at home, these should be given to you before you leave.

After the operation, often all or parts of your hand will feel numb. If this was not present before the operation, it is normally due to local anaesthetic given to reduce any discomfort. It will wear off over the next few hours or by the next day. You may experience pins and needles during this process. You should take some pain-killers before you go to bed on the first night after your operation, even if you have no pain at the time.

Your bandage should be kept clean and dry. There may be plaster of Paris (stiffening) within the bandage. It is

vital that this remains dry. A plastic bag over your dressing while showering is advisable.

You should keep your hand raised to the level of your heart, or preferably to the level of your shoulder as much as possible. This reduces swelling and pain. After a 'block' you should keep your arm in a sling until you have regained full control and power in your arm.

Your car insurance will not be valid for 24 hours after a general anaesthetic. Additionally you should not drive if you have a splint or bulky dressing on your hand.

Will I be seen in clinic?

We will ask you to return to the outpatient clinic for follow-up appointments, as this is where the doctors, nurses and therapists who are skilled in problems relating to the hand are based.

The first follow-up appointment is usually within two weeks following your operation. Normally you will be seen by the nurses and hand therapists initially, to start your rehabilitation. The doctor's appointment is often later after your rehabilitation has started. We will give you your appointments before you leave the hospital.

You should contact ambulatory care, the hand co-ordinator or A&E if:

- You have any bleeding which does not stop. First try to make it stop bleeding by raising your hand up above your head, and pressing firmly with your other hand for 5 minutes, by the clock (no dabbing or peeping to see if it has stopped, just constant, firm pressure)
- Your fingers appear dusky (grey or dark blue) or cool
- Your fingers have pins and needles or become numb after the effects of the local anaesthetic have worn off (after approximately 24 hours)
- You have a bandage or plaster cast that feels too tight due to further swelling
- If you cannot sleep due to increasing pain, even though you have taken pain-killers
- If the bandage or plaster of Paris gets wet, becomes loose, dirty or floppy
- You have a smelly discharge from your wound